

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Original) Food or a pharmaceutical composition for preventing hypertension, which inhibits the elevation of blood pressure via the long-term oral ingestion thereof and comprises at least one member selected from among acetic acid, acetate ion, and acetate.

2. (Original) The composition according to claim 1, which comprises at least one member selected from among acetic acid, acetate ion, and acetate in amounts of 0.36 g to 30 g in total (in terms of acetic acid) per 1,000 g of composition.

3. (Currently Amended) The composition according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein the intake of at least one member selected from among acetic acid, acetate ion, and acetate is adjusted to 0.5 g to 5 g in total (in terms of acetic acid) per day.

4. (Currently Amended) The composition according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein the period of ingestion is 3 weeks or longer.

5. (NEW) A method for preventing, ameliorating, or treating hypertension which comprises a long-term oral ingestion of food or a pharmaceutical composition comprising at least one member selected from among acetic acid, acetate ion, and acetate.

6. (NEW) The method according to claim 5, wherein the elevation of blood pressure is inhibited or reduced via the long-term oral ingestion of the composition.

7. (NEW) The method according to claim 5, wherein the composition comprises at least one member selected from among acetic acid, acetate ion, and acetate in amounts of 0.36 g to 30 g in total (in terms of acetic acid) per 1,000 g of composition.

8. (NEW) The method according to claim 5, wherein at least one member selected from among acetic acid, acetate ion, and acetate is ingested in amounts of 0.5 g to 5 g in total (in terms of acetic acid) per day.

9. (NEW) The method according to claim 5, wherein the period of ingestion is 3 weeks or longer.

10. (NEW) A method for inhibiting or reducing the elevation of blood pressure which comprises a long-term oral ingestion of food or a pharmaceutical composition comprising at least one member selected from among acetic acid, acetate ion, and acetate.

11. (NEW) The method according to claim 10, wherein the composition comprises at least one member selected from among acetic acid, acetate ion, and acetate in amounts of 0.36 g to 30 g in total (in terms of acetic acid) per 1,000 g of composition.

12. (NEW) The method according to claim 10, wherein at least one member selected from among acetic acid, acetate ion, and acetate is ingested in amounts of 0.5 g to 5 g in total (in terms of acetic acid) per day.

13. (NEW) The method according to claim 10, wherein the period of ingestion is 3 weeks or longer.